

# Puget Sound Area Lifestyle Articles

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
Puget Sound Partnership

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

RFP NO. 2013-30

**NOTE:** *If you download this RFP from an agency website located at <http://www.psp.wa.gov/funding.php>, you are responsible for checking back periodically in order for your organization to receive any RFP amendments or bidder questions/agency answers.*

**PROJECT TITLE:** Puget Sound Area Lifestyle Articles

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** September 28, 2012–5:00 p.m. *Pacific Standard Time, or Pacific Daylight Time*, Olympia, Washington, USA.

E-mailed proposal only, faxed or hard copy proposals will not be accepted.

**ESTIMATED TIME PERIOD FOR CONTRACT:** October 29, 2012 –October 29, 2013

The Agency reserves the right to extend the contract for up to two additional one-year periods at the sole discretion of the Agency.

**CONSULTANT ELIGIBILITY:** This procurement is open to those consultants that satisfy the minimum qualifications stated herein and that are available for work in Washington State.

### CONTENTS OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

1. Introduction
2. General Information for Consultants
3. Proposal Contents
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5. Exhibits
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Washington State, Puget Sound Partnership, hereafter called "AGENCY," is initiating this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from firms interested in participating on a project to write blog articles for the Puget Sound Starts Here Web site and campaign [www.pugetsoundstartshere.org](http://www.pugetsoundstartshere.org).

### 1.2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK

This fall, the Partnership and partners will launch the second phase of the Puget Sound Starts Here campaign and Web site. In an effort to increase the stories we share about Puget Sound, its surrounding environment, and the people who enjoy it, we're asking for several local Puget Sound area businesses to share their experience and knowledge on the following topics by providing articles for the Puget Sound Starts Here website and other media.

In exchange, writers will receive a byline and footer, linked to their business Web site, on the Puget Sound Starts Here web site. In order to be eligible for contracts, the Consultant must do business in one of the following counties: San Juan, Island, Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Kitsap, Jefferson, and Clallam.

Topic suggestions:

- **Local Food** (For example: Fish, Shellfish, Recipes, Growing, Preparation, How-to's – fillet a fish, shuck an oyster, cook salmon, native foods)
- **Local Recreation** (For example: Fishing – rivers, lakes, Puget Sound, Beaches – best for sand castles, picnics etc., crabbing, shrimping, shellfishing, types of Puget Sound – shellfish, fish, crab, etc., sail and motorboating, native culture, kayaking, canoeing, water sports, camping, biking, winter sports, hiking, ATV/Motor sports, nature reserves, whale watching, birding, wildlife, hunting, scenic viewpoints, byways, bridges, lighthouses)
- **Natural Home, Lawn Care and Gardening** (For example: native plant selection, natural lawn and garden care, natural home care, septic system maintenance, good bugs, how-to grow in the northwest, farmers markets, urban gardening, raingardens, rain barrels, permaculture, soil care, well care, farming, animal management)
- **Vehicle Maintenance and Care** (For example: how commercial car washes protect the environment, how-to spot oil leaks, basic preventative vehicle maintenance, transportation alternatives, boat cleaners, boat care)

Example of Article Promotion:

## **Puget Sound How-to Story Title**

*By First Name Last Name, Linked Puget Sound Area Business Name*

Footer promotion:

*First Name Last Name is the [title] of [Linked Puget Sound Area Business Name] in {City, Washington}*

Articles should be focused on the activities, how-to, or lifestyle stories, but should not advertise a specific business. Articles are encouraged to include videos and interactive links to additional educational materials.

All content must be original or derived from original work of the contractor. Previously published material (including electronic publications such as websites or blogs) will not be accepted.

The Agency reserves the right to exclude proposals and articles from businesses whose services or products conflict with the Action Agenda for Puget Sound ([http://www.psp.wa.gov/action\\_agenda\\_2011\\_update\\_home.php](http://www.psp.wa.gov/action_agenda_2011_update_home.php)).

Each contractor will provide 12 articles (one per month), 500 to 1500 words, due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. All articles must be approved by the RFP Coordinator, are subject to editing by the Agency, and may require the contractor to make changes. Articles are not guaranteed posting to the site and may be removed at anytime. Failure to submit all 12 articles will result in the removal of the byline and footer links, and business name, but not in the removal of the authors name on any previously submitted articles.

Several contracts will be awarded. Contracts will be offered on a yearly basis.

Submissions should be 3 – 5 pages, in addition to standard contracting requirements mentioned in section 3 – Proposal Contents:

- Topic Samples: 12 suggested article topics (topics can be negotiated with RFP Coordinator)
- Samples:
  - Writing Sample: One writing sample. (Approximately 600 – 1000 words)
  - Photographic Samples: 3-5 photographic examples
- Business Summary: One page brief on the business. Include the counties the business operates in, and links to Web site, logo and social media pages.

### **1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Minimum qualifications include:

- Licensed to do business in the State of Washington, or provide a commitment that it will become licensed in the State of Washington within thirty (30) calendar days of being selected as the Apparently Successful Contractor.
- Owns or manages a business in one of the following Puget Sound counties: San Juan, Island, Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Kitsap, Jefferson, and Clallam
- Owns or manages a business directly related to the subject matter of the proposed articles, for at least two years

### **1.4 COMPENSATION**

In exchange for articles supplied, the contractor will receive a byline and footer for each article, linked to their business Web site, on the Puget Sound Starts Here web site. Select articles, at the Agency's choosing, will be highlighted on the website home page. The Puget Sound Partnership will advertise the website in its social media and other publications associated with the Puget Sound Starts Here campaign. Puget Sound Starts Here brand recognition among Puget Sound residents is currently at 26%. Campaign goals over the next two years include raising brand recognition to 50% among Puget Sound's 4.5 million residents.

### **1.5 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this RFP is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about October 29, 2012 – October 29, 2013. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of the AGENCY.

### **1.6 CONTRACTING WITH CURRENT OR FORMER STATE EMPLOYEES**

Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington. Proposers should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting a proposal that includes current or former state employees.

## **1.7 DEFINITIONS**

Definitions for the purposes of this RFP include:

**Agency** – The Puget Sound Partnership is the agency of the state of Washington that is issuing this RFP.

**Apparent Successful Contractor** – The consultant selected as the entity to perform the anticipated services, subject to completion of contract negotiations and execution of a written contract.

**Consultant** – Individual or company interested in the RFP and that may or does submit a proposal in order to attain a contract with the AGENCY.

**Contractor** – Individual or company whose proposal has been accepted by the AGENCY and is awarded a fully executed, written contract.

**Proposal** – A formal offer submitted in response to this solicitation.

**Proposer** - Individual or company that submits a proposal in order to attain a contract with the AGENCY.

**Request for Proposals (RFP)** – Formal procurement document in which a service or need is identified but no specific method to achieve it has been chosen. The purpose of an RFP is to permit the consultant community to suggest various approaches to meet the need at a given price.

## **1.8 ADA**

The AGENCY complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Consultants may contact the RFP Coordinator to receive this Request for Proposals in Braille or on tape.

## 2. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR CONSULTANTS

### 2.1. RFP COORDINATOR

The RFP Coordinator is the sole point of contact in the AGENCY for this procurement. All communication between the Consultant and the AGENCY, upon release of this RFP, shall be with the RFP Coordinator, as follows:

Name	Rae A. McNally
E-Mail Address	<a href="mailto:Rae.mcnally@psp.wa.gov">Rae.mcnally@psp.wa.gov</a>
Mailing Address	326 East D Street, Tacoma, WA 98421-1801
Phone Number	360.918.2285 (email is preferred)

Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding on the AGENCY. Consultants are to rely on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator. Communication directed to parties other than the RFP Coordinator may result in disqualification of the Consultant.

### 2.2. ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES

Issue Request for Proposals	August 21, 2012
Question & answer period	August 27-31, 2012
Issue last addendum to RFP	September 5, 2012
Proposals due	September 28, 2012
Evaluate proposals	October 1-10, 2012
Announce "Apparent Successful Contractor" and send notification via fax or e-mail to unsuccessful proposers	October 11, 2012
Hold debriefing conferences (if requested)	October 18, 2012
Negotiate contract	October 22 – 29, 2012
Begin contract work	October 29, 2012

The AGENCY reserves the right to revise the above schedule.

## **2.3.SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

### **ELECTRONIC PROPOSALS:**

The proposal must be **received by the RFP Coordinator** no later than 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time or Pacific Daylight Time, in Olympia, Washington, on **September 28, 2012**

Proposals must be submitted electronically as an attachment to an e-mail to the RFP Coordinator. Attachments to the e-mail shall be in Microsoft Word format or PDF. Zipped files cannot be received by the AGENCY and cannot be used for submission of proposals. The cover submittal letter form must have a scanned signature of the individual within the organization authorized to bind the Consultant to the offer. The AGENCY does not assume responsibility for problems with Consultant's e-mail. If the AGENCY'S email is not working, appropriate allowances will be made.

Consultants should allow sufficient time to ensure timely receipt of the proposal by the RFP Coordinator. Late proposals will not be accepted and will be automatically disqualified from further consideration, unless the AGENCY'S e-mail is found to be at fault. All proposals and any accompanying documentation become the property of the AGENCY and will not be returned.

## **2.4. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE**

Proposals submitted in response to this competitive procurement shall become the property of the AGENCY. All proposals received shall remain confidential until the contract, if any, resulting from this RFP is signed by the Director of the AGENCY, or his Designee, and the apparent successful Contractor; thereafter, the proposals shall be deemed public records as defined in Chapter 42.56 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

Any information in the proposal that the Consultant desires to claim as proprietary and exempt from disclosure under the provisions of Chapter 42.56 RCW, or other state or federal law that provides for the nondisclosure of your document, must be clearly designated. The information must be clearly identified and the particular exemption from disclosure upon which the Consultant is making the claim must be cited. Each page containing the information claimed to be exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified by the words "Proprietary Information" printed on the lower right hand corner of the page. Marking the entire proposal exempt from disclosure or as Proprietary Information will not be honored.

If a public records request is made for the information that the Consultant has marked as "Proprietary Information," the AGENCY will notify the Consultant of the request and of the date that the records will be released to the requester unless the Consultant obtains a court order enjoining that disclosure. If the Consultant fails to obtain the court order enjoining disclosure, the AGENCY will release the requested information on the date specified. If a Consultant obtains a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction enjoining disclosure pursuant to Chapter 42.56 RCW, or other state or federal law that provides for nondisclosure, the AGENCY shall maintain the confidentiality of the Consultant's information per the court order.

A charge will be made for copying and shipping, as outlined in RCW 42.56. No fee shall be charged for inspection of contract files, but twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the RFP Coordinator is required. All requests for information should be directed to the RFP Coordinator.

## **2.5 REVISIONS TO THE RFP**

In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, addenda will be provided via e-mail to all individuals, who have made the RFP Coordinator aware of their interest. Addenda will also be published on <http://www.psp.wa.gov/funding.php>. For this purpose, the published questions and answers and any other pertinent information shall be provided as an addendum to the RFP and will be placed on the website.

If you downloaded this RFP from the Agency website located at: <http://www.psp.wa.gov/funding.php>.

You are responsible for sending your name, e-mail address, and telephone number to the RFP Coordinator in order for your organization to receive any RFP addenda.

The AGENCY also reserves the right to cancel or to reissue the RFP in whole or in part, prior to execution of a contract.

## **2.6 MINORITY & WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS PARTICIPATION**

In accordance with chapter 39.19 RCW, the state of Washington encourages participation in all of its contracts by firms certified by the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE). Participation may be either on a direct basis in response to this solicitation or on a subcontractor basis. However, no preference will be included in the evaluation of proposals, no minimum level of MWBE participation shall be required as a condition for receiving an award, and proposals will not be rejected or considered non-responsive on that basis.

The established annual procurement participation goals for MBE is 10% and for WBE, 4%, for this type of project. These goals are voluntary. For information on certified firms, consultants may contact OMWBE at 360/753-9693 or <http://www.omwbe.wa.gov>.

## **2.7 ACCEPTANCE PERIOD**

Proposals must provide 60 days for acceptance by AGENCY from the due date for receipt of proposals.

## **2.8 RESPONSIVENESS**

All proposals will be reviewed by the RFP Coordinator to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in this RFP. The Consultant is specifically notified that failure to comply with any part of the RFP may result in rejection of the proposal as non-responsive. .

## **2.9 MOST FAVORABLE TERMS**

The AGENCY reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Consultant can propose. There will be no best and final offer procedure. The AGENCY does reserve the right to contact a Consultant for clarification of its proposal.

The Apparent Successful Contractor should be prepared to accept this RFP for incorporation into a contract resulting from this RFP. Contract negotiations may incorporate some or all of the Consultant's proposal. It is understood that the proposal will become a part of the official procurement file on this matter without obligation to the AGENCY.

## **2.10 CONTRACT AND GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS**

The apparent successful contractors will be expected to enter into a contract which is substantially the same as the sample contract and its general terms and conditions attached as Exhibit A. In no event is a Consultant to submit its own standard contract terms and conditions in response to this solicitation.

The AGENCY will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Consultant in preparation of a proposal submitted in response to this RFP, in conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related to responding to this RFP



### **2.11 NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT**

This RFP does not obligate the state of Washington or the AGENCY to contract for services specified herein.

### **2.12 REJECTION OF PROPOSALS**

The AGENCY reserves the right at its sole discretion to reject any and all proposals received without penalty and not to issue a contract as a result of this RFP.

## **3. PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

The major sections of the proposal are to be submitted in the order noted below with the same headings. Items marked “scored” must be included as part of the proposal to be considered. Items marked “scored” are those that are awarded points as part of the evaluation conducted by the evaluation team.

### **3.1. LETTER OF SUBMITTAL (MANDATORY)**

The Letter of Submittal must be signed and dated by a person authorized to legally bind the Consultant to a contractual relationship. The Letter of Submittal is to consist of a one-page summary of the business, including the following information:

1. Name, address, principal place of business, telephone number, and fax number/e-mail address of legal entity or individual with whom contract would be written.
2. Include the counties the business operates in and links to Web site, logo and social media pages.

### **3.2. Content Submission(mentioned in section 1.2)(SCORED)**

1. Proposed Content Topics: 12 suggested article topics (topics can be negotiated with RFP Coordinator)
2. Business Summary and Qualifications
3. Samples (Writing, photographic)

### **3.3. OMWBE Certification (OPTIONAL AND NOT SCORED)**

Include proof of certification issued by the Washington State Office of Minority and Womens Business Enterprises (OMWBE) if certified minority-owned firm and/or women-owned firm(s) will be participating on this project. For information: <http://www.omwbe.wa.gov>.

## 4. EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

### 4.1. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Responsive proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the requirements stated in this solicitation and any addenda issued. The evaluation of proposals shall be accomplished by an evaluation team(s), to be designated by the AGENCY, which will determine the ranking of the proposals.

The RFP Coordinator may contact the Consultant for clarification of any portion of the Consultant's proposal.

### 4.2. EVALUATION WEIGHTING AND SCORING

The following weighting and points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

Proposal –100%	100points
Proposed content topics	35 points
Appropriateness and qualifications of business	30 points
Quality of samples	35 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100POINTS</b>

AGENCY reserves the right to award the contract to the Consultant whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of the AGENCY and the state of Washington.

### 4.3. NOTIFICATION TO PROPOSERS

The AGENCY will notify the Apparently Successful Contractor of their selection in writing upon completion of the evaluation process. Individuals or firms whose proposals were not selected for further negotiation or award will be notified separately by e-mail.

### 4.4. DEBRIEFING OF UNSUCCESSFUL PROPOSERS

Any Consultant who has submitted a proposal and been notified that they were not selected for contract award may request a debriefing. The request for a debriefing conference must be received by the RFP Coordinator within three (3) business days after the Unsuccessful Consultant Notification is e-mailed or faxed to the Consultant. Debriefing requests must be received by the RFP Coordinator no later than 5:00 PM, Pacific standard time, in Olympia, Washington on the third business day following the transmittal of the Unsuccessful Consultant Notification. The debriefing must be held within three (3) business days of the request.

Discussion at the debriefing conference will be limited to the following:

- Evaluation and scoring of the firm's proposal;
- Critique of the proposal based on the evaluation;
- Review of proposer's final score in comparison with other final scores without identifying the other firms.

Comparisons between proposals or evaluations of the other proposals will not be allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted in person or on the telephone and will be scheduled for a maximum of one hour.

#### 4.5. PROTEST PROCEDURE

Protests may be made only by Consultants who submitted a response to this solicitation document and who have participated in a debriefing conference. Upon completing the debriefing conference, the Consultant is allowed three (3) business days to file a protest of the acquisition with the RFP Coordinator. Protests must be received by the RFP Coordinator no later than 5:00 PM Pacific standard time, in Olympia, Washington on the third business day following the debriefing. Protests may be submitted by e-mail, but must then be followed by the document with an original signature.

Consultants protesting this procurement shall follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures shall not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to Consultants under this procurement.

All protests must be in writing, addressed to the RFP Coordinator, and signed by the protesting party or an authorized Agent. The protest must state the RFP number, the grounds for the protest with specific facts and complete statements of the action(s) being protested. A description of the relief or corrective action being requested should also be included.

Only protests stipulating an issue of fact concerning the following subjects shall be considered:

- A matter of bias, discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator;
- Errors in computing the score;
- Non-compliance with procedures described in the procurement document or AGENCY policy.

Protests not based on procedural matters will not be considered. Protests will be rejected as without merit if they address issues such as: 1) an evaluator's professional judgment on the quality of a proposal, or 2) AGENCY'S assessment of its own and/or other agencies needs or requirements.

Upon receipt of a protest, a protest review will be held by the AGENCY. The AGENCY Director or an employee delegated by the Director who was not involved in the procurement will consider the record and all available facts and issue a decision within five (5) business days of receipt of the protest. If additional time is required, the protesting party will be notified of the delay.

In the event a protest may affect the interest of another Consultant that also submitted a proposal, such Consultant will be given an opportunity to submit its views and any relevant information on the protest to the RFP Coordinator.

The final determination of the protest shall:

- Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold the AGENCY's action; or
- Find only technical or harmless errors in the AGENCY's acquisition process and determine the AGENCY to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest; or
- Find merit in the protest and provide the AGENCY options which may include:
  - Correct the errors and re-evaluate all proposals, and/or
  - Reissue the solicitation document and begin a new process, or
  - Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate.

If the AGENCY determines that the protest is without merit, the AGENCY will enter into a contract with the apparently successful contractor. If the protest is determined to have merit, one of the alternatives noted in the preceding paragraph will be taken.

## **5. RFP EXHIBITS**

Exhibit A    Personal Service Contract

## Personal Service Contract

This contract agreement is made and entered into by and between the State of Washington, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP), and the \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter referred to as "Consultant".

### RECIPIENT INFORMATION

### Project Manager

UBI:  
EIN/TIN:

### PSP INFORMATION

### Project Manager

**PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP**  
**326 EAST D STREET**  
**TACOMA, WA 98421-1801**

**Rae A. McNally**  
**Rae.mcnally@psp.wa.gov**  
**(360) 918-2285**

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this agreement is to launch the second phase of the Puget Sound Starts Here campaign and Web site. In an effort to increase the stories we share about Puget Sound, its surrounding environment, and the people who enjoy it, we're asking for several local Puget Sound area businesses to share their experience and knowledge by providing articles for the Puget Sound Starts Here website and other media.

### PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance under this Agreement will be from the date of execution (\_\_\_\_\_) through October 29, 2013. **No work shall commence under this agreement until it has been fully executed by both parties.**

### COMPENSATION AND PAYMENT

Each contractor will provide 12 articles (one per month), 500 to 1500 words, due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. In exchange, contractor will receive a byline and footer, linked to their business Web site, on the Puget Sound Starts Here web site.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All rights and obligations of the parties to this agreement shall be subject to and governed by the terms and conditions contained in this contract.

### ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This agreement, including referenced exhibits and any other provision, term or material expressly incorporated by reference, represents all the terms and conditions agreed upon by the parties. No other statements or representations, written or oral, shall be deemed a part hereof.

### APPROVAL

This agreement shall be subject to the written approval of the Puget Sound Partnership's authorized representative and shall not be binding until so approved. The agreement may be altered, amended, or waived only by a written amendment executed by both parties.

This agreement is executed by the persons signing below, who warrant they have the authority to enter into a contractual agreement.

### **[RECIPIENT'S NAME]**

### **Puget Sound Partnership**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Marc Daily

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approved as to form  
Washington State Attorney General